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SUBJECT: CWC: OPCW TOP STRUCTURE TRANSITION

REF: THE HAGUE 617

Classified By: Janet E. Beik for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

This is CWC-66-09

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: With the transition to a new Director-General (DG) in July 2010, much of the top structure in the Technical Secretariat (TS) of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is expected to change. The top structure includes the Deputy Director-General (DDG) and the nine D2-level directors. Outgoing DG Rogelio Pfirter (Argentina) has extended the contracts of all top structure incumbents through the end of 2010, five months after the incoming DG will take up his post. However, there are rumors that the DDG, who ran unsuccessfully to succeed Pfirter, may leave before the new DG takes office. Also, of the nine director positions, one is currently vacant and three of the incumbents -- including the U.S.-citizen Director of Administration -- will need to leave due to the Organization's tenure or retirement age policies. Identifying a desirable replacement for the Director of Administration should be a top U.S. priority. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) During the 58th Executive Council (EC-58) session in October, Ahmet Uzumcu (Turkey) emerged as the consensus candidate to be the next Director-General of the OPCW's Technical Secretariat (ref A). At its annual meeting in December, the Conference of States Parties (CSP) is expected to approve the EC's recommendation of Uzumcu. He would then take over from current DG Pfirter in July 2010. While there already has been speculation on when and how actively Uzumcu will manage the transition period, Del understands that he plans to engage only after the CSP formally approves his appointment.

¶3. (C) With Pfirter's departure, the top structure of the TS is expected to turn over nearly completely, particularly as many of the TS's current directors have worked beyond the maximum seven-year limit imposed by the Organization's tenure policy or the retirement age of 62. The DG has authority to extend contracts beyond the retirement and tenure limits on a case-by-case basis, and Delreps have learned that Pfirter has

extended the contracts of the DDG and the eight current directors to the end of 2010. However, Administration Director Ron Nelson (U.S.) recently reconfirmed to Delreps his intention to retire in July 2010. The position of Administration Director -- as in many international organizations -- is seen as a U.S. seat, and Nelson's departure will open it up for another U.S. citizen. Unlike other positions in the TS, vacancies in the top structure traditionally are never advertised; instead, the DG relies on member states to put forward qualified candidates from which to choose.

¶4. (C) Former Inspectorate Director Ichiro Akiyama (Japan) resigned in July 2009 after refusing to have his contract extended beyond the tenure limit. Despite intensive lobbying from both Japan and South Korea for their respective candidates to fill the vacancy, Pfirter has decided to keep it open for Uzumcu to fill. Other imminent vacancies include the Verification Director -- held by Horst Reeps (Germany) since 2002 -- and the Internal Oversight Director -- held by Mohamed Louati (Tunisia) since 1997. Legal Advisor Santiago Onate (Mexico), Policy-Making Organs Secretary Alexander Q(Mexico), Policy-Making Organs Secretary Alexander Khodakov (Russia) and External Relations Director Liu Zhixian (China) have each served beyond their initial four-year contracts but still have two to three years before reaching the tenure limit. Special Projects Director Krzysztof Paturej (Poland) and International Cooperation and Assistance Director Kalimi Mworio (Kenya) are still serving within their initial four-year contracts.

¶5. (C) Delreps have also learned that DDG John Freeman (UK), who was one of the seven candidates competing to replace Pfirter, may plan to leave before the end of his contract, clearing the way for the new DG to select a DDG of his choice. Considering that Uzumcu comes from the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), Freeman's replacement is expected to come from one of the other regional groups and most likely from a developing country to maintain the Preparatory Commission "gentlemen's agreement" for a "developed-developing" balance between the DG and DDG positions. While much discussion of the DDG position took place before and during EC-58, particularly among African member states, Del does not believe that Uzumcu made promises to fill certain positions in order to obtain support. Algeria, also with an unsuccessful DG candidate, has its eye on the DDG position and possible candidates in mind.

¶6. (C) DEL RECOMMENDATION: A top U.S. priority should be to start the search for a well-qualified, experienced replacement for Administration Director Nelson. He has played an important role in ensuring the OPCW's smooth and effective management, and this is a key position which remains in the U.S. interest to keep. As it will be up to the U.S. to find suitable candidates to propose to the new DG, we should consider ways to widen the search net in order to attract the largest pool of qualified candidates with strong management, political and multilateral experience.

¶7. (U) BEIK SENDS.

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